

County of Los Angeles – Department of Mental Health
OFFICE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Thursday, December 19, 2013

~ **Approved Minutes** ~

**Please note the minutes are a brief summary and
not a word for word transcription of events at this meeting.**

Larry Gasco, Chairman, Presiding

1. Call to Order – Larry Gasco

- The meeting was called to order by Larry Gasco
- Roll Call by Canetana Hurd
- Attendance recorded as follows:
Absent excused: Howard Askins, Delores Huffman, Hayward McNeill,
Barry Perrou, Victoria Sofro, and Phillip Chen

2. Chairman's Report – Larry Gasco

- Chairman Gasco dedicated the meeting to the memory and achievements of Nelson Mandela who passed December 5. Chairman Gasco asked that as a tribute to Mr. Mandela that we dedicate ourselves to combat the stigma of mental illness.
- Chairman Gasco thanked Supervisor Antonovich for making it possible to transport 50+ people to the AV meeting on a bus provided by the Fifth District.
- Welcome and Introductions – Commissioner Judy Cooperberg welcomed everybody for showing support and interest in the Antelope Valley community. Ms. Cooperberg introduced the special guest; Assemblyman Steve Fox; Mayor of Palmdale Jim Ledford; Capitan Don Ford, Palmdale Sheriff Station; Dave Pilon, President & CEO, Mental Health America Los Angeles; and Senator Steve Knight.
- Executive Committee Report – No report, December meeting was cancelled.
- MHC/SAAC Chairs Report – Karen Macedonio, SA 5 Co-Chair reported that SAACs are participating in the enhancement to increase membership and diversity in the community. SAACs are taking community building and strategic planning trainings offered by DMH, and working with DMH on the three year plan. SAACs are learning how important it is to have a voice and communication among each other to provide feedback on what is needed for the future. Ms. Macedonio concluded that SAACs are learning and growing together.

Chairman Gasco added to the report that Carl McKnight, Coordinator for Veteran Services and Dave Rambeau, Executive Director for American Indian Veterans attended the meeting and spoke on Veteran Services in Los Angeles and what is being done.

3. **DMH Report** – Dr. Marvin J. Southard, Director of Mental Health
Thanked the Antelope Valley for their hospitality. Dr. Southard asked the Commission to consider submitting a letter of support for the DMH SB 82 plan and how it will impact the County as a whole and Antelope Valley in particular.

Dr. Southard gave an update on SB 82. The bill passed under Senator Steinberg with the idea of focusing on efforts partnerships with hospitals, law enforcement, and communities to elevate the overcrowding in the jails and emergency rooms. He further discussed the bill in two pieces.

1. Onetime money invested to be used for crisis intervention and crisis stabilization programs that can be served by people who are brought in by law enforcement, and an opportunity to decompress the current heavy load that exists in hospitals that have emergency rooms.

LA County was awarded \$40 million dollars. Its tentative plan is to invest in 5 new urgent care centers, two in the Antelope Valley, and in other parts in the County that have no psychiatric urgent care centers. DMH also has to develop a plan to continue funding the projects. DMH approached the hospital association to partner and donate into a pool to be used as a local match to draw down federal funding.

2. Hire 172 triage workers who link people in crisis with the services that they need to move into recovery. Triage workers will be temporary staff with lived experience with mental illness. Triage workers will serve forensic clients associated with AB109 programs, identify those who are in emergency crisis, acute mental care, veterans or older adults, homeless, substance use, and mediate for foster youth having difficulty in their placement or with caregivers.

Dr. Southard announced that effective January 1, 2014 Medicaid will expand benefits for alcohol and drug treatment adding detox treatment, residential treatment, and outpatient treatment. The change will benefit mental health and law enforcement because 70% of inmates are co-occurring patients; they will achieve recovery better by treating the addiction.

Dr. Southard further announced that Senator Steinberg introduced a proposal to refund the MIOCR (Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction) program. MIOCR is a mandated connection between law enforcement and treatment as an approach to dealing with homeless and other mental health crime issues. LA County might get as much as \$15 million in grant funds through MIOCR.

- DMH Projects to Reduce Pressure of the Jail Population

Dr. Southard discussed projects needed to reduce the jail population DMH:

1. Improvements in mental health treatment in the jail system by adding mental health staff and changing procedures; Sheriff is working on a custody process for DMH clinical staff.
2. In conjunction with the DA and Sheriff, divert mentally ill people who would be better served outside the jail. Establish a pre-booking agreement to treatment for crimes like public intoxication and fighting an innkeeper. Improve and enhance the mental health court.

ACTION – The Mental Health Commission write a letter in support of the Department of Mental Health’s position on Senate Bill 82.

- **Motion made by Chairman Gasco, moved by Commissioner Lubin, and seconded by Commissioner DeBose.**
- **Chairman Gasco stated, the motion unanimously passes with all members present and voting.**

4. **Public Comments**

Comments from Special Guest

Assemblyman Steve Fox spoke about the complex issues regarding access to mental health care in the Antelope Valley. Reductions in funding cuts in mental health services since the recession, statistics on homelessness, shortage of beds in facilities, staff shortages, and Medi-care limitations. The provisions of SB 82 that allow funds for those who work on the front lines of mental health help to care for mentally ill. The Affordable Care Act will guarantee people of America who are the working poor access to affordable health insurance.

Mayor Jim Ledford, City of Palmdale welcomed the Commission back to the AV. He spoke about the great need in the AV and offered his support to the Commission, Commissioner Cooperberg, and DMH to meet the needs in the valley. Mayor Ledford further stated that working together is the answer to continue addressing the AV needs.

Dr. Dave Pilon, President & CEO, Mental Health America Los Angeles expressed his appreciation for the passing of SB 82. He shared that the community welcomes the services provided by providers and the AV community.

Public Comments from audience

The following commenters did not have an opportunity to speak:

Robin Rene Turner (Followed up with Larry Gasco)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treated unfairly and turned down after attending Mental Health America for a year and a half • Homeless senior, living in a Lancaster shelter, was told to find her own housing • In need of housing
Kimberly Whyte (Followed up with Larry Gasco)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has had a difficult time obtaining a DMH volunteer badge due to background. • Has completed numerous programs in community to assist peers • Has been a volunteer for three years
Ronald L. Asberry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless and has not received help from MHA, though he is a member • Seems as though nobody cares about members, and good workers have been removed
Vernell Carroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Advocate • Deaf son suffers with mental illness, would like to find a program to help him
Gary Stephens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about Risperdal being used for treatment • New jails shouldn't be built, more focus should be on psych/counseling
Dan Dapice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 year old autistic son, has trouble receiving services through Regional Center • Denied through hearings and appeals • Reports from three different doctors, but Regional Center still denies services • Has contacted Mental Health Department in Sacramento
David Heseltine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time should be allotted for open forum comments • Housing for homeless

Doreen Gillcrest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like help getting an apartment voucher • Client of MHA, receives good treatment • Was told there is no funding for housing
Chapman Rogers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be more computer resources and training • More funding for members who are in need of services • Group facilitators should receive pay or incentives for their services
Jennifer June Lewis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of protocol for Each One Teach One program
Cindy Gernek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question for Dr. Southard- "Do you see any changes to peer advocates and community workers? Will they still work caseloads, or have more hands on peer work?"

The following commenters had an opportunity to speak:

Sgt. (Ret) James J. Schickel, USMC, CA Dept. of Veterans Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for mental health services in Antelope Valley, consider bringing Valor Program to this area
Don P. Ford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short comment of Sheriff's Department interaction with acute patients
Maria Gutierrez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Title 24 Housing (real estate program) and vocational • No special need advocate on site • Funds are being misused: transportation, supplies, computers
Sandra & Ron Govin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severely mentally ill in need of care • Finds limited services with long waiting lists

John Wanko (Dept. of Rehabilitation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for continued resources in Antelope Valley • Working to increase employment of DMH consumers
Dennis R. Miller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the recovery model rather than the medical model • Health advocate
Wendy Cabil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read an inspirational story titled "Inner Thoughts"
Barbara B. Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for establishment of counties that can come together in Antelope Valley to create an inpatient/outpatient psych. treatment center
Scott Eugene Crouch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies need to react in collaboration of client needs, esp. housing • Better security should be placed in buildings
Pam Inaba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announced presence of LA County Client Coalition • Conference in June • Monthly meeting • Outreach efforts • New website
Jean Harris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciates MHC for being present and including Antelope Valley community needs • Looking forward to psych urgent care units • MET team held a meeting • Great need for housing for those with mental health issues, beds for adults and children, and access to treatment and education
Patricia Russell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Son is incarcerated in Twin Towers jail • Has not been given medication for over a month despite requests by his clinician • He is becoming more

	<p>anxious and depressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to provide services such as housing, case management, and psychiatry thanks to services provided by DMH and DMH contracted agencies such as MHA • Read a recovery story
Aziza Shepherd	
Trish Bogna (Antelope Valley Partners for Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings from Mental Health Meet and Greet
Rosa Fuller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police need training on dealing with mentally ill • Greater early detection and support services for youth
Dana Kilanowski	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAMI AV saved family though education program • No support living facilities in the AV for ill family members and children • Facilities should be created to stabilize people so they can return to their families
Diane Grooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting support for children and teen suicide prevention and mental health services
Janet Ebert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Son in hospital for 3 week stays, separated from general population • MHA should expand services • Mentally ill should receive help right away, and should not be imprisoned • Mentally ill are frequently abused by police
Lori Wolf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate number of adult beds • Inhumane and unacceptable that there are no juvenile beds (closest is in Alhambra) • NAMI is growing • People are desperate to find support groups • Problem connecting with therapists
Sabrina Gutierrez (social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much are we willing to

worker)	<p>pay to provide help for those struggling with serious mental illness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of mental illness can reduce the number of arrests and save taxpayers • Treatment can help people move on with their lives and be able to get housing and jobs
Maria Maravillo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need better services for families
Michelle Binoya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 year resident of Antelope Valley • Mental health consumer and employee • Difficult to find proper resources for mental health • No urgent care available • Not enough groups for people in the area

5. **Approval of Minutes – Commissioner DeBose motioned for approval of November 2013 minutes of the Commission.**

Commissioner Cooperberg noted a correction and requested an amendment to the minutes. Commissioner Lubin seconded the motion to approve the amended minutes.

Chairman Gasco stated, the motion unanimously passes to approve the amended minutes with all members present and voting.

6. **Commissioners’ Reports –** Tabled to permit public comments
7. **Meeting adjourned – Site Tour**
8. **NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, January 23, 2014
11 am – 1:30 pm
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Minutes prepared by Canetana Hurd